

Voices of Hope

WINTER 2020



Supporting the Educational Needs of Families During the Pandemic

San Jose Earthquakes Volunteers Support Food Distribution

Rental Assistance Program

Christmas Giving Opportunities

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we begin moving into holiday season, such as it is in this year of pandemic, I can only say that I am so thankful. **I am grateful for each of our generous donors, for our faithful volunteers, for our committed public, private and nonprofit partners, and most of all, for our amazing staff.** Throughout the past eight to nine months, they have made the “**pandemic pivot**” to provide disaster assistance with courage, compassion, good humor and grace.



This “pivot” meant that we significantly expanded our emergency food distribution, and in the past eight months have fed over **400,000 individuals, ten times more people than the agency served in all its programs in the previous year.** As more seniors came to us homeless and hungry, we expanded our senior nutrition with “grab and go” meals outside of John XXIII Multiservice Center and Eastside Neighborhood Center, and our homeless services at The Window increased by 50%. We continue distributing food boxes at eight Family Resource Centers. Thanks to the amazing partnership with Second Harvest and with courageous volunteers in seven parishes, we continue to provide home delivered groceries to seniors and “touchless drive-through” groceries to hundreds of families at parishes six days a week.

The “pivot” meant that, thanks to Governor Newsom and Catholic Charities of California, we were able to distribute \$6 million in state funds to 12,000 immigrant families in six weeks. Thanks to generous donors and the City of San Jose and other partners, we are also providing over \$7 million in rental and financial assistance to needy families through the end of December. And thanks to the generous and creative partnerships of community-based organizations, the public sector, academia, philanthropy and businesses, we are helping build the **Bridge to Recovery network to move families out of the economic crisis of the pandemic** through a stronger integrated safety net and workforce development system.

Thanks to the creativity of staff, the “pivot” means that we have been able to continue **most of our services** either remotely or through a hybrid model of remote and in-person services like our CORAL after school program, Youth Empowered for Success and Behavioral Health Services.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the “pivot” means that even though we weren’t able to hold our annual bocce fundraiser, **donors are increasing their gifts to help us meet the massive demand.** Thanks to your generosity our staff are able to respond with agility, skill, courage and compassion.

Finally, I encourage all our supporters to continue to invest through Catholic Charities in the amazing families we serve. For these are the ones who have had to **learn how to pivot the most** as they face unemployment, hunger, the loss of health insurance, the potential loss of their homes, the stress of trying to care for their children at home while trying to find work, and increased anxiety and depression related to unemployment and the uncertainty of the pandemic. Please keep them in your prayers. And please be generous. Thank you!

With much gratitude, many blessings to you and your family,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory R. Kepferle".

Gregory R. Kepferle, CEO

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County is honored to be recognized as a Nonprofit Champion Winner: 2020 Silicon Valley Business Journal Community Impact Awards

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Parish Engagement Program recognized in Catholic Charities USA Innovation Challenge

Catholic Charities Parish Engagement Program was recently recognized as a finalist in Catholic Charities USA's Innovation Challenge and grant competition among its peer nationwide affiliates seeking innovative, replicable, scalable solutions to moving individuals and communities out of poverty. The team received numerous inquiries and was quickly invited to present the program in greater depth on a national webinar. The program received a \$100,000 grant as part of the competition from Catholic Charities USA.

The program is designed to tackle poverty through community building, direct services and referrals, and establishing long-term deep connections between volunteers and those seeking pathways to self-sufficiency.

In its first six months at its pilot location at Our Lady of Refuge Parish, 80 volunteers had already been trained and 1,800 participants served. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program has gained 268 volunteers, with another 265 in process, and has served an average of 1,200 people per week. Director of Advocacy and Community Engagement Fr. Jon Pedigo and Program Manager Bridget Balajadia lead a small but focused team that is expanding the Parish Engagement model into new neighborhoods and extending capacity with each new volunteer.

Watch a video to learn more about the program at CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/parishengagement. ■



Irene is one of many volunteers who come each week to help at the Parish Engagement Program's Community Market at Our Lady of Refuge Parish.

“Catholic Charities has helped me so much during this pandemic. I lost my job in March when things started closing down due to COVID. I am a single mother and I was struggling so much to stay afloat and continue to keep a roof on my son’s head. They have been helping me with my rent while I continue looking for a job and it’s helped me so much. I appreciate all the assistance I have been receiving.”

Monica,
who received support from the
Rental Assistance Program

Pandemic Response: Rental Assistance

Monica is one of many individuals receiving help through a recently launched rental assistance program available to individuals or families who are behind on rental payments due to loss of income related to COVID-19 thus protecting renters from homelessness and landlords from revenue losses.

For more information about eligibility, please call the rental assistance program at (408) 758-0011. For mono-lingual Vietnamese: (408) 757-8044 and/or (408) 757-6661. For mono-lingual Spanish: (408) 757-7703 and/or (408) 757-7591.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CORAL program pivots in new learning environment as pandemic moves schools online

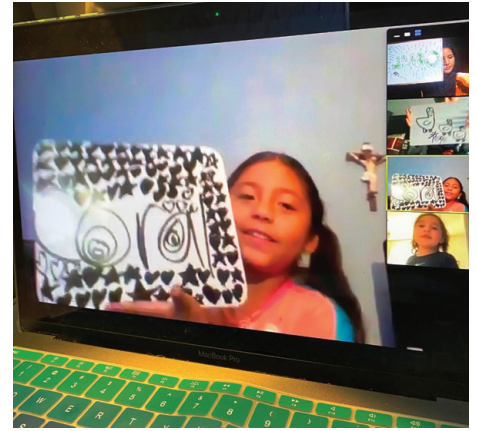
Since the pandemic shutdowns in March, Catholic Charities has mobilized agency resources and realigned staff to deploy a rapid response to the ongoing crisis.

Education is one of five Catholic Charities focus areas – along with food, housing, health and economic security – and the agency’s 140 CORAL after-school instructors continue to meet the emerging needs of families impacted by COVID-19. In pre-pandemic times, CORAL (Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning) operated after-school learning programs in 22 schools and one community center serving students

daily in kindergarten through eighth grade.

“This school year, we are committed to supporting families, many who were already struggling to make ends meet, with new and creative ways for children adapting to a new learning environment,” according to CEO Greg Kepferle. “Our focus continues to be supporting our most vulnerable student populations.”

Starting in late August, CORAL instructors are providing in-person programs at 10 public schools in the Franklin-McKinley School District (FMSD) for high-needs populations of students including: homeless students, special-education



qualified, higher academic needs, and the siblings of these students. Instruction takes place under strict public health guidelines while working in “stable cohorts” which are small social bubbles, advised by health experts since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic as a mechanism to keep interactions with others low. The CORAL staff are not acting as teachers but rather are supporting the students in their learning, as well as conducting activities for the students during the class breaks.

“Students arrive at school in the morning to attend their virtual class with their school day teacher. In the stable cohort, there is a CORAL After-School Instructor with them for support during the synchronous and asynchronous classroom activities,” according to America Aguirre Gomez, CORAL Managing Director. “The CORAL in-person program continues to work closely with school district staff and teachers to deliver programming to support students with academic needs, homework assistance, and connectivity.”



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



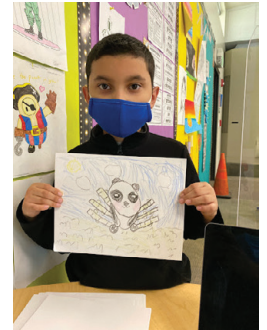
In addition, CORAL provides after-school distance learning at four public schools in the San Jose Unified School District, and five public schools and three charter schools in the Franklin McKinley School District.

The curriculum for afterschool includes pre-recorded guided activities for students and parents to access anytime at home, including art and STEM projects as well as enrichment activities such as music and dance. Reading and academic activities are also developed and provided. Students have participated in activities such as a virtual tour of the San Jose State campus and experiencing the Monterey Bay Aquarium online.

CORAL staff also prepares activity kits with instructions and materials for students and families to pick up at school sites or to receive via home delivery. Kits included STEM, literacy, and art projects that can be done independently or used in conjunction with pre-recorded guided activities.

Beyond academics, one of the most important roles of CORAL instructors is providing wellness check-ins for families.

CORAL staff is assisting parents and caregivers to adapt



to online learning methods, including support with technology, platforms/applications, tips, and best practices for supporting their children's online learning. Staff also conduct "wellness check-in" calls for students and families to assess concerns, barriers, and family circumstances that may impact students' participation and learning. And each student in the program has a one-on-one with his or her CORAL Afterschool Instructor for 30 minutes once a week.

America adds, "Especially during these uncertain times, our families are very grateful in having a place where their students can get support and have a safe place to be during the day." ■



SPOTLIGHT

Joan Dohina *Staff*

We are pleased to announce that Joan Dohina has joined Catholic Charities as the Director of Human Resources, overseeing the agency's HR Department and providing support for employees at 90+ sites in Santa Clara County. She brings extensive HR experience in both nonprofit and for-profit companies, most recently as Director of HR for Avalanche Technology, and previously with Caminar as HR Director and Momentum for Mental Health as HR Manager. Joan has a degree in Psychology from UC Davis.

Why does Catholic Charities' mission appeal to you?

With my family's long history of community service, especially to the less fortunate, I've always desired to continue this tradition of service that was ingrained in me since my childhood. Catholic Charities gives me a strong connection to that service orientation.

What is your personal philosophy as an HR professional?

My practice has always been to develop strong working relationships with other management team members to solidify the value of the role of Human Resources as a strategic business partner. I've also fostered positive relationships with frontline employees to bridge the

divide between staff and management, enhance employee engagement, and boost staff morale.

What are your observations from your first weeks on the job?

I am truly impressed by the passion that resonates from each person to serve others, especially those who are underserved. During these unpredictable and challenging times, and in spite of the insurmountable workloads, the staff continues to remain committed to the mission.

The whole agency has a 'do what it takes' approach to serve the community's emerging needs in responding to the pandemic, and calls for social justice and equality. The agility we've demonstrated in creating new programs and reallocating our resources to provide assistance where it is needed most has been nothing short of amazing. I am excited, proud and honored to have an opportunity to be a part of this. ■



Joan Dohina



Corporate Partners: San Jose Earthquakes

For the first time, the San Jose Earthquakes and Quakes Foundation have joined forces with Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. This partnership is rooted in a mutual goal of addressing food insecurity and fighting poverty in the Bay Area.

In July, the San Jose Earthquakes launched "Pledge 74" with a goal of raising \$740,000 towards the cause, and increasing

awareness and volunteerism to address these critical needs in our community. The Earthquakes activated their front-office staff and die-hard cheering section fans to volunteer multiple times in August at Catholic Charities food distribution sites. Those days of volunteering added up to 284 hours of community service and helped distribute an estimated 133,000 meals to the community!

Currently, Catholic Charities is providing more than 114,000 meals weekly across six food distribution sites in Santa Clara County. These sites are manned by a small army of volunteers – including the San Jose Earthquakes – who help register, organize, and place groceries into long lines of cars awaiting their week's supply of food.



Thank you, San Jose Earthquakes, for your generosity, support, and time to help Catholic Charities address food insecurity and poverty in Santa Clara County. ■

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Pandemic, tax law changes shift the landscape for year-end donors

With year-end approaching and tax law changes in 2020 in response to the pandemic, it's easy to get confused about giving and charitable deductions.

Know that giving through Catholic Charities to support those most impacted by the pandemic and economic uncertainty is always a clear investment, one that awards dividends far beyond your financial bottom line.

Here are a few things to remember when considering your giving before the end of 2020:

- The CARES act allows anyone, even those who do not itemize on their tax return, to deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions.
- Required minimum distributions have been suspended in 2020. That said, distributions from your IRA to Catholic Charities remains a great way to support our poverty-fighting work.

- Despite a hyperactive year in the stock market, appreciated securities remain a great way to give more, pay less, and avoid capital gains taxes.
- For the most generous, the CARES act raised the maximum charitable deduction amount to 100% of your income (cash donations only). At year end, you may have a clearer picture of your household annual income, making the planning of charitable giving more accurate.
- Using your donor advised fund ("DAF") to support Catholic Charities is still a great way to put your philanthropic dollars to work. We encourage you to use your DAF to give rather than save since giving is your DAF's ultimate purpose. Note that you may only deduct up to 60% of your annual gross income for cash contributions to your DAF.

If you have questions about year-end giving or need sample IRA distribution letters, please contact David Russo, Senior Director of Planned Giving at 408-325-5248 or drusso@catholiccharitiesscc.org.

Thank you to our Golf and Bocce sponsors for their continued support

Catholic Charities expresses its gratitude to all of our sponsors who continued their support of our annual events – the 36th Annual Golf Tournament and the 12th Annual Bocce Tournament – even as they were paused in 2020 due to the pandemic and social distancing guidelines.

Thank you to Heritage Bank and Western Digital who continued their loyal sponsorship of our golf tournament. Lexus of Stevens Creek provided their sponsorship of the Champions of Charity Opportunity Drawing which was held in a virtual format this year with an agency update from CEO Greg Kepferle. Congratulations to our winners Greg and Molly Rhine!

We also are thankful for Bocce supporters. Michael Van Every, President and CEO of Republic Urban Properties, led the efforts to raise funds that would have been generated by the tournament. These funds support Catholic Charities food distribution to families in our community who've been affected by the pandemic.

For information on event sponsorship or to support the food distribution initiative that is replacing the Bocce Tournament, please contact Jimmy Shoven at jshoven@catholiccharitiesscc.org or 408-325-5259.

SAVE THE DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S EVENTS:



**37th Annual
Invitational Golf Tournament**

**June 21, 2021
at Silver Creek Valley Country Club**



**13th Annual "Roll Against Poverty"
Bocce Tournament**

**October 7, 2021
at Campo di Bocce in Los Gatos**

Address Service Requested



Christmas Giving Opportunities

Please Support Catholic Charities This Holiday Season

Sign Up for AmazonSmile

With AmazonSmile, your online holiday shopping can support Catholic Charities at no cost to you. Visit smile.amazon.com to learn more.

Donate Gift Cards for Season of Sharing

Donations of gift cards make the holidays brighter for Catholic Charities clients. We recommend Target, Walmart or Visa gift cards. For information, email Nick Ingoglia, ningoglia@catholiccharitiesscc.org or call (408) 325-5250.

Support Senior Meals

Consider making a gift of \$87.50 to provide a week of nutritious meals for elderly individuals served at our senior centers. For more information, email Alison Poetsch apoetsch@catholiccharitiesscc.org or call (408) 325-5288.

See our feature in *The Mercury News* Wishbook

Catholic Charities is proud to be featured in *The Mercury News* 2020 Wishbook of holiday giving opportunities. Visit wishbook.mercurynews.com.

For more information, visit CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/christmas-giving
To make your gift online, visit CatholicCharitiesSCC.org/donate